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RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9023
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 6599
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4415
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2406
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 RANGOON 000273

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2019
TAGS: [CASC](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: BURMA: REGIME GRANTS ACCESS TO AMCIT; NO NEWS ON
ASSK DOCTOR

REF: RANGOON 271 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Poloff Chelsia Wheeler for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) The GOB granted consular access late in the day on May 13 to John Yettaw (septel), who has confirmed he swam to the home of Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) and stayed for 44 hours. Yettaw told us Burmese authorities have treated him "wonderfully;" he is fine (see proposed press guidance at para 8). A self-described pro-government website has published additional photos of Yettaw and has attempted to suggest an inappropriate relationship between him and ASSK. The Church of Latter Day Saints (LDS) reports authorities detained two Burmese Mormons in recent days. Yettaw is a Mormon and claims to have delivered a Book of Mormon to ASSK's doorstep on a previous occasion. ASSK's personal physician, Dr. Tin Myo Win (aka Douglas), remains unaccounted for. His family and National League for Democracy (NLD) Spokesman Nyan Win confirmed to us that Douglas has not appeared in court, and they still have received no information on his situation. Meanwhile, the NLD released a statement May 12 expressing concern about ASSK's health. End Summary.

Consular Access Granted for Amcit

¶2. (SBU) Three hours after the Charge on May 13 reiterated the Embassy's need to gain consular access to Amcit John Yettaw, MOFA's Director of Consular Affairs Min Lwin phoned back to confirm the grant of access for later in the day. Per septel, the Consular Chief visited with Yettaw for a half hour. Burmese MOFA and police officials were present. The officials said Yettaw has not yet been charged with any offense; they declined to predict next steps.

¶3. (C) The Consul reports Yettaw appeared well and said authorities have treated him "wonderfully." He has no complaints at all. He admitted swimming to ASSK's compound and spending 44 hours there. Yettaw said he visited ASSK this time because he had a dream that he must warn her of an

impending assassination attempt. He said ASSK asked him to leave, and he did so. He declined to provide additional details given the police setting. Yettaw said he has access to his medicines and medical care, and is feeling fine. He said he is refusing food, but only as a gesture of appreciation for the situation of the people of Burma. He said he is not/not on a hunger strike. Yettaw signed a full privacy act waiver, and asked that the Consul phone his wife.

Website Attempts to Smear ASSK

13. (SBU) A local self-described pro-government blog (www.tharkinwe.com) published additional photos of Yettaw, including some that may have been taken at ASSK's home and others depicting some of the items he carried with him. The photos appear genuine, some at least apparently came from Yettaw's camera -- reportedly confiscated by police. How photos purportedly in the police's possession ended up on a local blog is an interesting question. A caption to the photos reads in Burmese, "Michael and then John," presumably referring to ASSK's late husband Michael and insinuating an inappropriate relationship now between her and Yettaw. Early on the afternoon of May 13, the photos and all references to John Yettaw were removed from the website.

LDS Members Detained; Church Draws Connection to Yettaw

14. (C) Consul received word May 13 via ACS/Bangkok that the
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Church of Latter Day Saints' (LDS) Bangkok-based area legal counsel, Michael Jensen, had learned from LDS Burma Country Director Clyde Errol that Burmese authorities had recently detained at least two Burmese LDS members in the wake of John Yettaw's detention. One was released without charges May 13; the other is reportedly still being interrogated. Yettaw informed the Consul that he first swam to ASSK's compound late last year after receiving a vision to provide her a copy of the Book of Mormon. Yettaw said he left the book at her door. Presumably, the Mormon connection brought the police investigation of Burmese Mormons.

No Further News on ASSK's Doctor; NLD Issues Statement

15. (C) Both Douglas' family and NLD Spokesman Nyan Win told us May 13 that they have no knowledge whether the doctor has appeared in court, as some exile media are reporting. In an RFA interview broadcast May 12, the doctor's younger brother, U Ko Ko, said that he has no information about where Douglas is or why he is being held. According to U Ko Ko, officials telephoned the doctor's residence, asked to meet with him, and the doctor complied. U Ko Ko said that on past occasions the doctor returned home from similar interrogations after two or three hours.

16. (SBU) On May 12 the NLD Central Executive Committee released a statement expressing concern about ASSK's health. Citing the various restrictions imposed on ASSK and noting news of her poor health, the statement argued for her right to adequate health care. The statement did not call for ASSK's release.

Comment

17. (C) We are thankful for consular access to Mr. Yettaw, though the week's delay was unfortunate. While we now have a full Privacy Act Waiver, we nevertheless recommend press guidance that is devoid of much detail; see draft language below. Per septel, Mr. Yettaw's story is complicated and, in our view, is best left for him to explain to the media at some later date when he can do so himself.

Draft Press Guidance

18. (SBU) Begin draft press guidance:

-- On May 13 Burmese authorities granted the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon consular access for 30 minutes to the detained American citizen who had gained access to the residence of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

-- The American citizen has authorized us to identify him as John Yettaw and to report that he has been treated well while in police custody. He has not been charged, nor have Burmese authorities provided information on the next steps in his case.

-- The Embassy has stressed to Burmese authorities the U.S. Government's strong interest in Mr. Yettaw's case and our concerns for his health, welfare, and fair treatment. The Embassy has also requested ongoing consular access to Mr. Yettaw.

-- We are not in a position to say anything more about this case at this time.

If Pressed:

-- Mr. Yettaw confirmed that he gained access to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's residence but did not elaborate.

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DINGER